

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT

I. AGENCY Health Care Financing Administration

REPORT PREPARED BY Phillip Brown

TITLE Director, Division of Freedom of Information & Privacy

ADDRESS 7500 Security Boulevard, North Building, N2-20-06,

Baltimore, Maryland 21244

PHONE NUMBER (410) 786-5352

ELECTRONIC ADDRESS FOR REPORT ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB:

<http://www.hcfa.gov/foip/default.htm>

ADDRESS FOR PAPER COPIES OF REPORT

(SAME AS ABOVE)

II. HOW TO MAKE A FOIA REQUEST: <http://www.hcfa.gov/foip/default.htm>  
(Describe or provide an electronic address for instructions in FOIA reference guide)

A. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all individual agency components and offices that process FOIA requests (do not include coordinating offices; do not use persons' names - only titles):

<http://www.hcfa.gov/foip/default.htm>

B. Brief description of agency's response time range(s)

The agency's response time ranges from as little as 7 days for simple FOIA requests that seek documents that may be directly released to requesters by HCFA program offices, to upwards of 18 months for complex FOIA requests that seek records that must be reviewed against the FOIA exemptions and processed in accordance with the agency's first-in, first-out practice.

C. Brief description of why some requests are not granted:

Requests are not granted in order to preserve the confidentiality of sensitive personal, commercial and governmental information within HCFA's possession and control, and to protect the effective and efficient operations of the agency. To this end, the exemptions most often applicable to HCFA records are Exemptions 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7. This agency's decision to deny access to a record (or portion thereof) is made only after application of the Attorney General's "foreseeable harm" standard.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS USED IN REPORT:

A. Agency-specific acronyms or other terms:

None

B. Basic terms (from FOIA UPDATE, Summer 1997):

HCFA uses all terms from FOIA Update, Summer 1997.

IV. EXEMPTION 3 STATUTES:

A. List of Exemption 3 statutes relied on by the agency during report year:

1. 42 U.S.C. 1320 (c)(9)

2. 41 U.S.C. 253(b)

1. Brief description of type(s) of information withheld under each statute:

42 U.S.C. 1320(c)(9) - information created or acquired by a Peer Review Organization in the exercise of its duties and functions.

41 U.S.C. 253(b) - any proposal submitted by a contractor in response to the requirements of a solicitation for a competitive proposal, if such proposal is not set forth or incorporated by reference in the ensuing contract.

2. Has a court upheld the use of each statute? If so, cite example:

No

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V. INITIAL FOIA/PA ACCESS REQUESTS (Include all requests, 3rd or 1st party):

A. Number of initial requests (line 1 + line 2 - line 3 = line 4):

1. Number of requests pending at close of preceding fiscal year: 1721
2. Number of requests received during reporting fiscal year: 25,311
3. Number of requests processed during reporting fiscal year: 24,031
4. Number of requests pending at close of reporting fiscal year: 3,001  
(Enter this number also as Line VII.B.1.)

B. Disposition of Initial Requests:

1. Number granted in full 22,941
2. Number granted in part 114
3. Number of full and partial denials 911

a. Number of times each FOIA exemption was used:

Exemption 1             
Exemption 2 6  
Exemption 3 7  
Exemption 4 14  
Exemption 5 18  
Exemption 6 860  
Exemption 7 10  
Exemption 8             
Exemption 9

4. Other reasons for non-disclosure (total) 179
  - a. no records 44
  - b. referrals 45
  - c. request withdrawn 62
  - d. fee-related reason 1
  - e. records not reasonably described 0
  - f. not a proper FOIA request for some other reason 12
  - g. not an agency record 13
  - h. duplicate request 2
  - i. other (specify) 0

VI. APPEALS OF INITIAL DENIALS OF FOIA/PA REQUESTS (include all access requests whether first or third party):

A. Numbers of Appeals:

1. Number of appeals received during the fiscal year 24
2. Number of appeals processed during the fiscal year 0

B. Disposition of Appeals:

1. Number completely upheld N/A
2. Number partially reversed N/A
3. Number completely reversed N/A

a. Number of times each FOIA exemption used (counting each exemption used once per appeal)

- Exemption 1
- Exemption 2
- Exemption 3
- Exemption 4
- Exemption 5
- Exemption 6
- Exemption 7
- Exemption 8
- Exemption 9

4. Other reasons for non-disclosure (total) N/A
  - a. no records \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. referrals \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. request withdrawn \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. fee-related reason \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. records not reasonably described \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. not a proper FOIA request for some other reason \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. not an agency record \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. duplicate request \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

VII. COMPLIANCE WITH TIME LIMITS/STATUS OF PENDING REQUESTS:

A. Median Processing Time for Requests Processed During the Year.

1. Simple Requests (if multiple tracks used):
  - a. number of requests processed 23,478
  - b. median number of days to process 45
2. Complex Requests (specify for any and all tracks used):
  - a. number of requests processed 553
  - b. median number of days to process 365
3. Requests Accorded Expedited Processing:
  - a. number of requests processed 9
  - b. median number of days to process 45

B. Status of Pending Requests (if multiple tracks are being used, report for each track as well as totals).

1. Number of requests pending as of the end of the fiscal year covered in this report (from Line V.A.4) 3,001
  - a. Simple Requests 1,421
  - b. Complex Requests 1,580
2. Median number of days that such requests were pending as of that date
  - a. Simple Requests 25
  - b. Complex Requests 270

VIII. COMPARISONS WITH PREVIOUS YEAR(S) (Optional): No

IX. COSTS/FOIA STAFFING:

A. Staffing levels:

1. Number of full-time FOIA personnel 19
2. Number of personnel with part-time or occasional FOIA duties  
(in total work-years) 48,880
3. Total number of personnel (in work years) 88,400

B. Total costs (including staff and all resources):

1. FOIA processing (including appeals) 1,260,244
2. Litigation-related activities (estimated) 50,000
3. Total costs 1,310,244
4. Comparison with previous year(s) (including percentage of change)  
(optional) N/A

X. FEES:

A. Total amount of fees collected by agency for processing requests: \$373,650

B. Percentage of total costs: 28.5%

XI. FOIA REGULATIONS (including fee schedule):